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# Watson's Art Journal.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JAN. 11, 1868.

PUBLICATION OFFICE, CLINTON HALL, ASTOR PLACE.

## THE NEW OPERA HOUSE.

Thursday evening inaugurated the new enterprise already known to the public as Pike's Opera House. The occasion was marked, especially, by the first appearance in this city, for a long period, of the Strakosch Operatic Company, with Madame La Grange as prima donna, Brignoli and Massimiliani as tenors.

It is needless for us to speak anything about the house; we have already in these columns given a description of it. It only remains to say that under the full glare of the gas, and with 4,000 people filling every seat, and every available inch of standing room, the interior came out as the most brilliant and beautiful one we have ever seen in this country or in Europe. There is a chasteness and richness in the embellishment, and a skill in lighting, that gives it effectiveness beyond our most sanguine expectation.

Of the acoustic properties of the house it is only necessary to say that several times during the evening most excellent opportunities occurred to test, when the vast audience held its very breath to catch the lowest murmur of La Grange, and found that not a note was marred.

The opera was *Trovatore*; La Grange as Leonora, Adelaide Phillips, Azeeuna, and Massimiliani as Manrico. Possibly it was the warm effect of the house that seemed to put the audience in good humor from the very start. They looked for something good, and found it in their old love, La Grange, acknowledging her by the most hearty reception ever accorded to any artiste. To speak of her singing seems hardly necessary beyond saying that this charming artiste returns to us with all the voice of the olden time, and all the force and finish that first recommended her to the public sympathy. That the public thought so was apparent on the fall of the curtain at the close of the first act, when the house rose to accord her a perfect ovation. She was called forward accompanied by Massimiliani and Orlandini, and greeted with tumultuous applause, to say nothing of several of the most elegant bouquets ever laid at a prima donna's feet. In fact, through the whole opera there was a response from the house to every pleasant effort of the artists, only one small circumstance occurring to cross the perfect smoothness of the whole, and that

unworthy of mention where so much was beautiful.

In the audience, the press was in full force, and the artistic world well represented, but the fashionable world was predominant, and we will venture to say that never in the best days of the Academy of Music has it seen a more brilliant and distinguished assemblage than Pike's Opera House on Thursday night.

At the conclusion the call was for Mr. Pike, who came forward looking as though he might be happy, and was greeted with a storm of applause and huzzas symbolical of American enthusiasm. As soon as there was silence, Mr. Pike, in response to the whispers of a few thousand people for a speech, said that he did not make speeches, but he built opera houses; but that, following the old rule of make a speech or sing a song, he would do the first. He had never sung but two songs in his life; one was something to a young lady about sharing his cottage, and she shared it; the other was about not going home till morning. The result of the latter he did not tell the audience, but we think they imagined it. He ended by declaring that there was a gentleman in the house who could make a speech, seeing that he had built the theatre, and called upon Mr. Calvert Vaux to respond, which Mr. V. did by coming to the front of a box and bowing; after which the audience went good naturedly out into the cold, humming Verdi and thinking seriously of hot supper and Delmonico.

All told, the inauguration of Pike's Opera House we look upon as a great success.

## ENGLISH OPERA -- ACADEMY OF MUSIC.

The performances by Richings Opera Company this week have been confined to the old familiar operas, which do not demand any special comment. The preparations necessary to produce in proper style Wallace's beautiful Opera "*The Desert Flower*," compelled the management to postpone the performance from Friday evening of this week until next Monday evening, when it will positively be given.

## WHAT THE THEATRES ARE DOING.

Open!

In the name of—

THE ART JOURNAL!

"You can't come in, sir!" says the Cerberus at the door.

We looked to see his three heads, but found only one; and that was upon the body of a very quiet looking individual with all the attributes of humanity. This individual followed up his conversation by saying:

"You can't pass here, sir, without an order from Mr. Vincent."

"I am Mr. Vincent!" said we.

The Cer—door-keeper looked at us—querely; it was plain he didn't see the likeness; therefore, we continued:

"I am Mr. Wheatley—" (another pause); I am the ART JOURNAL, (doorkeeper unmoved); I am public opinion, (no use).

"Must have an order from Mr. Vincent, sir!" says this man of iron.

"Very well, then, take in my card."

The card was taken in, and in a moment, following like the flash upon the match to gunpowder, came Vincent, and we had the *entree*.

Now, then! we think we hear said, what is this *entree*, and who is Vincent?

While we pleasantly satisfy curiosity on the first point, we deprecate ignorance on the second.

The *entree* was to Niblo's, that we might see a rehearsal of the new play; the WHITE FAWN!

As to Vincent: why Vincent is stage manager at that same place, and if there is upon the face of the *theatrical earth* any more energetic, hard-working, iron-constituted, mechanical-intellectual individual in that line, why—we would like to see him.

And so, we found ourselves on the stage at Niblo's during the rehearsal of the new piece, "*The White Fawn*," and we will venture to say that six people outside of the profession in New York, can't say the same thing, to-day.

And it is to these same outsiders that we desire to talk. Have you ever seen the rehearsal of a play? If so; have you ever seen the rehearsal of a *new* play; and thirdly, have you ever seen the rehearsal of "*The White Fawn*." No! we rather think not! And if not; all the pens that ever were made can't describe it.

Coming from the light of the street at 2 P. M., it was hard to accommodate our eyes to the more than semi-light into which we were ushered. Not only was it the light that bothered us, but swinging before our very eyes were sundry huge masses which took the form of clouds, tropical foliage, verdant bowers, and various other delightful shapes, which in spite of the proximity, which we are told by Mr. Shakspeare—a writer of the 16th century—destroys enchantment, were decidedly pleasant to look at, as being associated with certain memories.

Getting our eyes out of the clouds, we brought them to earth, and found it—if the boards of the stage can be considered as earth—peopled.

In the first place, as a centre piece we saw a pretty, natty figure of a woman, away down by the foot lights, singing, and we noticed that whatever she was singing she sang as though she meant to sing. We don't know who this was, but have a suspicion it was Fanny Stockton. If it was Fanny Stock-